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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 OES-07 ERDA-05 NRC-05
AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07
NEA-10 NSAE-00 USIA-06 OPIC-03 SP-02 TRSE-00
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DODE-00 FPC-01 H-01 INT-05 L-03 NSC-05 PM-04
SS-15 STR-04 ACDA-07 /148 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/RPE:PLLAASE:VF

APPROVED BY EUR/RPE:PLLAASE

LOES:CSIEGAL (DRAFT)

ERDA:JVANDERRYN (DRAFT)

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NRC, ERDA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:ENRG, OECD

SUBJECT: APRIL 28-29 OECD NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY (NEA)
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

REF: NE/A(77)1

1. SUMMARY. THE APRIL 28-29 NEA STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING DECIDED TO: (1) AMALGAMATE THE COMPUTER PROGRAM LIBRARY CENTER AT ISPRA AND THE NEUTRON DATA COMPILATION CENTER AT SACLAY IN A SINGLE FACILITY AT SACLAY; (2) POSTPONE ACTION ON MODERNIZING THE NEA STATUTE; (3) GIVE INITIAL APPROVAL TO PROPOSED 1978 WORK PROGRAM; (4) REVISE THE MANDATE OF THE NEA/IAEA STEERING GROUP ON URANIUM RESOURCES TO ACCOMMODATE A FURTHER EFFORT EVALUATING WORLDWIDE URANIUM RESOURCES; (5) CONTINUE FOR ONE YEAR THE NEA SYSTEM OF INFORMATION NOTES; (6) FORWARD TO THE OECD COUNCIL A DRAFT DECISION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MULTILATERAL CONSULTATION AND SURVEILLANCE MECHANISM FOR SEA DUMPING OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE; (7) ESTABLISH AD HOC GROUP TO EXAMINE NEW ROLE FOR STUDY GROUP ON LONG-TERM ROLE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY (NELT); (8) PUBLISH THE POLVANI REPORT ON RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; AND HOLD ITS NEXT MEETING ON OCTOBER 26-27.
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END SUMMARY.

2. NEA STEERING COMMITTEE HELD ITS REGULAR SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING AT THE OECD IN PARIS ON APRIL 28-29. U.S. REPRESENTATIVE WAS ERDA DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL R&D PROGRAMS JACK VANDERRYN. (ALL OECD COUNTRIES EXCEPT NEW ZEALAND ARE NEA MEMBERS; THE EC COMMISSION AND THE IAEA ALSO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF THE NEA.) MOST NEA MEMBERS WERE REPRESENTED BY DELEGATION FROM CAPITALS. STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN B. ALER PRESIDED; NEA DIRECTOR GENERAL IAN WILLIAMS WAS PRINCIPLE NEA SPOKESMAN. STEERING COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS ON SIGNIFICANT AGENDA ITEMS FOLLOW.

3. WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR-GENERAL DESIGNATE, IN OPENING STATEMENT NOTED NEA LIKELY CONTINUE ON SAFETY AND REGULATION AS MAJOR (2/3) PROGRAM EMPHASIS ALTHOUGH NOTING SECRETARIAT READINESS ADAPT TO NEW THINKING ON NUCLEAR MATTERS. NOTED STEERING COMMITTEE IN PAST HAS NOT EXERTED SUFFICIENT POLICY DIRECTION AND NEEDED IN FUTURE EXERCISE MORE INFLUENCE ON STRATEGY AND DETAILS OF PROGRAMS. ALSO NOTED HIGH QUALITY AND FLEXIBILITY OF SECRETARIAT STAFF BUT STRONG DEPENDENCE ON INPUT FROM NATIONAL EXPERTS.

4. FUTURE OF THE COMPUTER PROGRAM LIBRARY (CPL) AND THE NEUTRON DATA COMPILATION CENTER (CCDN). OVER STRONG ITALIAN OBJECTIONS, STEERING COMMITTEE AGREED TO SECRETARIAT COST-CUTTING PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE CPL (LOCATED AT ISPRA, ITALY) AND CCDN (LOCATED AT SACLAY, FRANCE) IN SINGLE CENTER AT SACLAY. (U.S. DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN EITHER PROGRAM.) WHEN CHAIR ANNOUNCED BROAD CONSENSUS FOR AMALGAMATION, ITALIAN REP RESERVED GOI POSITION. NEA DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL STROHL NOTED THAT ITALIAN RESERVATIONS CANNOT, UNDER NEA RULES OF PROCEDURES, PRECLUDE COUNCIL CONSIDERATION. ITALIAN REP THEN ASKED THAT ITALIAN RESERVATION BE NOTED WHEN TRANSMITTING NEA DECISION TO THE COUNCIL.

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5. MODERNIZATION OF NEA STATUTE. WHILE THERE WAS GENERAL SUPPORT FOR SECRETARIAT PROPOSAL FOR MINOR, NON-SUBSTANTIVE AMENDMENTS TO NEA STATUTE, THERE WAS SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION TO QUICK ACCEPTANCE OF U.S. PROPOSALS TO INSERT REFERENCES TO NON-PROLIFERATION GOALS. AFTER MAJORITY OF DELEGATIONS SAID THEY HAD NOT HAD TIME TO STUDY U.S. PROPOSALS, CONSIDERATION OF ENTIRE PACKAGE WAS POSTPONED UNTIL OCTOBER STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING. IN MEANTIME, LEGAL WORKING GROUP OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED PARTICIPANTS WILL TRY TO COME UP WITH ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE.

6. PROGRAM OF WORK FOR 1978. STEERING COMMITTEE GENERALLY

APPROVED PROPOSED 1978 WORK PROGRAM (NE(77)4), WITH FOLLOWING COMMENTS: DIRECTOR GENERAL--NUCLEAR SAFETY PROGRAM REQUIRES ADDITIONAL MANPOWER; CANADA--ADDITIONAL WORK, ESPECIALLY RADIATION SAFETY, ON FRONT END OF FUEL CYCLE DESIRABLE; U.S.--NEED FOR MORE CONCERTED ACTION ON WASTE MANAGEMENT, PREMATURE TO COMMIT NEA RESOURCES TO REPROCESSING STUDIES IN 1978, AND USG WILLING TO COMMIT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO "INTERNATIONAL URANIUM RESOURCES EVALUATION PROJECT" (IUREP); FRANCE--EXPRESSED INTEREST (WITH "SOME RESERVATIONS") IN IUREP AND SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL WORK ON GAS COOLED FAST REACTOR (GCFR), PERHAPS INCLUDING BUILDING A PILOT REACTOR; SWITZERLAND--STRESSED WORK ON FRONT END OF FUEL CYCLE; NETHERLANDS--WASTE MANAGEMENT NEEDS ADDITIONAL ATTENTION.

7. MODIFICATION OF THE MANDATE OF NEA/IAEA STEERING GROUP ON URANIUM RESOURCES. STEERING GROUP PROPOSED REVISED MANDATE TO ACCOMMODATE WIDESPREAD INTEREST IN WORLDWIDE EFFORT FOR EVALUATION OF URANIUM RESOURCES BEYOND THOSE ALREADY IDENTIFIED AND REPORTED. FRENCH SUGGESTED AMENDING STEERING GROUP'S PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE QUALITATIVE EVALUATION OF "REAL AVAILABILITY" OF ADDITIONAL URANIUM RESOURCES, WHICH SPARKED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LIVELY DEBATE. U.S. DEL CONCERNED THAT FRENCH AMENDMENT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS QUESTIONING RELIABILITY OF SOME SUPPLIERS. US-FRENCH CONSULTATIONS RESULTED IN ACCEPTABLE REVISED LANGUAGE. THE AMENDED REVISED MANDATE WAS THEN ADOPTED.

8. OUTCOME OF A SURVEY ON THE NEA SYSTEM OF INFORMATION NOTES. DESPITE QUESTIONS AS TO THE UTILITY OF THE NEA INFORMATION SYSTEM FROM THE CANADIAN, DUTCH AND U.S. DELEGATIONS, THE STEERING COMMITTEE DECIDED TO CONTINUE THE EXPERIMENT FOR ANOTHER YEAR. THE INFORMATION SYSTEM WILL BE REVIEWED AGAIN IN APRIL 1978.

9. ESTABLISHMENT OF A MULTILATERAL CONSULTATION AND SURVEILLANCE MECHANISM FOR SEA DUMPING OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE. DRAFT COUNCIL DECISION SPARKED LONGEST AND MOST INTENSE DEBATE OF ANY AGENDA ITEM. NORWAY PROPOSED AMENDMENT IN PREAMBULAR PORTION OF COUNCIL DECISION RECORDING (AS STATEMENT OF FACT) THAT SEVERAL MEMBER COUNTRIES OPPOSE SEA DUMPING OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE IN PRINCIPLE. AUSTRALIA, CANADA, DENMARK, FINLAND, IRELAND, PORTUGAL AND SWEDEN MADE INTERVENTIONS ACTIVELY SUPPORTING NORWEGIAN AMENDMENT; ONLY SWITZERLAND EXPRESSED OPPOSITION. STEERING COMMITTEE (WITH UK DELEGATE RESERVING PENDING INSTRUCTIONS) DECIDED TO INCORPORATE NORWEGIAN AMENDMENT IN TEXT OF DRAFT DECISION

FORWARDED TO COUNCIL, BUT FINAL DECISION RESTS WITH COUNCIL. STROHL NOTED NORWEGIAN AMENDMENT IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE LONDON CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION OF MARINE POLLUTION BY DUMPING OF WASTES AND OTHER MATTER. STEERING COMMITTEE ALSO ACCEPTED US DEL'S INTERPRETATION THAT PREVIOUSLY USED SEA DUMPING SITES BE KEPT UNDER SURVEILLANCE. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ATTEMPT TO EXPAND ITS CONSULTATIVE ROLE (THROUGH AMENDMENT OF DRAFT DECISION) WAS BEATEN BACK AFTER LIVELY DISCUSSION WHICH INDICATED MAJORITY OF DELEGATIONS SUPPORTED ORIGINAL TEXT LIMITING SUCH CONSULTATIONS

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TO POLICY ASPECTS. THE CHAIR NOTED THAT, AS DECIDED AT THE OCTOBER 1976 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING, THE DRAFT DECISION WOULD APPLY ON A VOLUNTARY, PROVISIONAL BASIS TO 1977 SEA DUMPING OPERATIONS.

10. REVISED MANDATE FOR NELT. ORIGINAL MANDATE ESTABLISHED 1964 NOW CLEARLY OUTDATED. STEERING COMMITTEE ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATION TO ESTABLISH AD HOC GROUP TO PREPARE REVISED NELT MANDATE. SUCH REVISION MIGHT PLACE NELT MORE

CLEARLY IN POSITION AS SENIOR ISSUE OR POLICY ORIENTED GROUP OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE. PICTET, SWITZERLAND, APPOINTED CHAIRMAN. REQUESTED GROUP REPORT BACK FINDINGS TO NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING. U.S. NOTED MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE COMPLETE TASK BY THAT TIME.

11. PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE REPORT ON OBJECTIVES, CONCEPT AND STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE. THE STEERING COMMITTEE ENDORSED THE PUBLICATION OF THE POLVANI REPORT, PROVIDING A COMPREHENSIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEMS, CURRENT PRACTICES AND POLICIES IN THE FIELD OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT, AS WELL AS RECOMMENDATIONS TO NATIONAL AUTHORITIES FOR THE LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER CLEARANCE BY THE NEA'S COMMITTEES ON "RADIATION PROTECTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH" AND "RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT." THE CHAIR NOTED THAT, ON PUBLICATION, THE REPORT WILL INCLUDE AN APPROPRIATE DISCLAIMER TO THE EFFECT THAT IT REPRESENTS INDIVIDUAL EXPERTS, 'RATHER THAN GOVERNMENTS', VIEWS.

12. CONSULTATION WITH ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ON ITS STUDY OF NUCLEAR WASTES ON THE ENVIRONMENT. SEVERAL DELEGATIONS, INCLUDING THE US, FRANCE, THE FRG AND JAPAN, EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE PROPOSED ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE STUDY MIGHT OVERLAP AND/OR DUPLICATE WORK ALREADY UNDERWAY IN THE NEA AND ELSEWHERE. FRG ESPECIALLY FELT THAT TOPIC WAS PRIME RESPONSIBILITY OF NEA. THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPRESENTA- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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TIVE INDICATED THE CONCERNS EXPRESSED AT THE STEERING COMMITTEE WOULD BE NOTED, BUT THAT THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ITSELF WOULD HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER AND IN WHAT MANNER IT WOULD PROCEED.

13. THE NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WILL BE OCTOBER 26-27.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 22-Sep-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NUCLEAR ENERGY, MEETING REPORTS, COMMITTEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE113919
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EUR/RPE:PLLAASE:VF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770176-0939
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197705110/baaaevyt.tel
Line Count: 261
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 606be888-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NE/A(77)1
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2345950
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APRIL 28-29 OECD NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY (NEA) STEERINGCOMMITTEE MEETING
TAGS: ENRG, OECD
To: OECD PARIS INFO ANKARA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/606be888-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009